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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/447,259	11/23/1999	JAMES D. MARKS	3042/0G691	3586

7590 08/06/2003

DARBY & DARBY P.C.
805 Third Avenue
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EXAMINER

JEANTY, ROMAIN

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3623

DATE MAILED: 08/06/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/447,259

Applicant(s)

MARKS ET AL.

Examiner

Romain Jeanty

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-- **Th MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cov r sheet with the correspond nce address --**

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 June 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 4, 6-9, 40, 43-49, 52, 54-57, 88 and 91-208 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) 1, 4, 6-9, 40, 43-49, 52, 54-57, 88, and 91-208 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:
 - I. Claims 1, 4, 6-9, 40, 43-49, 52, 54-57, 88, 91-131, drawn to a method, executed by a server, for providing answers on one or more topics from a set of experts on each topic to questions posted by users in communication with client interfaces, the server being in communication with the client interface and the set of experts, classified in class 705, subclass 9.
 - II. Claims 132-148, drawn to a personal expert interface in communication with a server for providing a plurality of users with communication with an expert in order to obtain answers to a plurality of questions, classified in class 706, subclass 47.
 - III. Claims 149-193, drawn to a method, executed by as server, of referring a question posed by at least one of a plurality of users to at least one of a plurality of experts, classified in class 705, subclass 26.
 - IV. Claims 194-208, drawn to a method, executed by a server, for providing answers from at least one expert to at least two questions posed by a plurality of users, the users communicating with the server via at least two client interfaces, each of the client interfaces identified to the users as a forum on a predetermined subject matter, whereby a user may choose to visit a forum, and each forum presenting the expert as an expert in the subject matter of the forum, the expert being

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presented simultaneously in at least two of the fora, classified in class 705, subclass 9.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

2. Inventions I, II, III and IV are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. In the instant case, invention III has separate utility such as an expert system for routing a question to a second expert chosen by a first expert referring a question posed. See MPEP § 806.05(d).
3. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and the search required for Group I is not required for Groups II, III and IV, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

Conclusion

4. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Romain Jeanty whose telephone number is (703) 308-9585. The examiner can normally be reached Monday-Thursday from 7:30 am to 6:00 pm. If attempts to reach the examiner are not successful, the examiner's supervisor, Tariq R Hafiz can be reached at (703) 305-9643.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1113.

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Any response to this action should be mailed to:

Commissioner for Patents

P.O. Box 1450

Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

or faxed to: (703) 305-7687

Hand delivered responses should be brought to Crystal Park 5, 2451 Crystal Drive,

Arlington VA, Seventh floor receptionist.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Romain Jeanty". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Romain" being more prominent than the last name "Jeanty".

Romain Jeanty

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August 4, 2003